

There's No Word for This Goodbye

I'm not Ok. But of course, I'd never tell him that.

"Are you OK?"

"Yes."

"Always, you're OK."

"For you, yeah."

My eyes trace the sound of luggage wheels against the floor. I follow everyone with my eyes. I look at their eyes. I look at everyone's eyes but his. I don't want to be haunted. I've been haunted up until now.

With quick force, he pulls me next to him. And like it's all I've ever wanted, I slide my head down to his shoulder. I look up at him slowly, chin, nose...I get just to the black line around his iris and it's enough to let me know I'm still not ready. I put my head down.

He finds my lips. They're too low. He lifts my chin. The first kiss is innocent, like our very first kiss. The second has me breathless, like the kiss under the mountain. The third...the third has me in yesterday, my ass in his hands, my back against the wall, letting his lips decide what I do next.

I put my head back down. We both feel the weight of each other.

"You're always trying. I'm always trying. But it's not working," he says.

"It's not right. It's not fated...or...meant to be," I reply. And now I can't stop looking at him.

"That's not always bad," I say. "Maybe it means there's something better, for both of us."

I'm staring at his darting brown eyes now and they're glassy. I can't take this anymore so I go to my phone.

"We have 10 more minutes. I'll leave you 10 minutes before your train." I make my declaration and then form a place for me in his shoulder, like I'm never leaving, ever.

There's an announcement. It's something about a train being delayed because of technical difficulties.

"Always technical difficulties," I mumble into his shoulder. He smiles.

"Yeah."

And I don't know why but that's when I lose it.

I fall into his hands like someone just kicked me in the stomach and he holds me up while I pretend I'm not crying. He's quiet. But he squeezes my hand back every time I squeeze his.

I want to know if he's crying too but I can't look up. I feel his stomach contract when I sniffle.

I look down at my boots and his sneakers. We've both never changed shoes. I think about how it would be so nice to dress up and go out, just once. I think about drinking. I think about the first time I met him and how I told him he was so smart and how I hope he still believes it. I think about how afraid I am of tomorrow.

But when he asks me "What?" I return, "Nothing." When the tears are gone I look at him again.

"I should to go...find my train," he says.
"Yeah," I say. "I'm leaving. I promise. I'm leaving now."
"Be careful."
"You be careful."
"Don't forget me."
"I won't."

I won't forget him. But I want him to forget all of me. I want him to live a free life. I want him to dance, laugh, and be with all the beautiful women out there. I love him that much. If I could say it all in Arabic, I would. But with goodbyes like this, my English is pointless.

Instead, I kiss him one last time. I pull on his shirt collar and try my best to give him every unsaid phrase on my tongue. I let him go. I turn around. I don't look back.